

Sharpen Your Firefighter-Recruit Interview Skills

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Since the Firefighter-Recruit Interview process might seem like a stressful, mysterious process, here are a few tips to help you sharpen your skills...

Prepare yourself for a City of Mesa Firefighter-Recruit Interview - and for the position.

- ✍ Research the City of Mesa Fire Department and its mission, vision, and customers (see the City's Fire Department website).
- ✍ Review and analyze the Firefighter-Recruit job description - qualifications, duties, essential functions, knowledge, skills, and abilities.
- ✍ Draft a summary for yourself of your qualifications and experiences.
- ✍ Review your invitation letter to confirm the interview time, approximate length, and location.



Know what to expect from an Oral Board interview.

- ⇒ You will only be able to use notes that are related to any preview question(s).
- ⇒ If you don't understand a question, you may ask the rater to repeat the question.
- ⇒ Raters will be taking notes and will not be looking directly at you during the interview.
- ⇒ Answers will be evaluated based on established criteria.
- ⇒ Raters can only evaluate your answers based on the information that you communicate during the interview.
- ⇒ The raters' role is to help the Department distinguish among candidates.
- ⇒ Remember that the raters want you to do well!

Know what to expect from the Firefighter-Recruit 1st Oral Board interview.

- ⇒ The board will be comprised of two sworn Fire personnel and one Human Resources Representative.
- ⇒ The raters will take turns asking several (approximately 5) questions.
- ⇒ The 1st interview time allotment will be 15 minutes.
- ⇒ Closing statements will not be allowed, and resumes or other materials will not be accepted at the 1st interview.



Know what to expect from the Firefighter-Recruit 2nd Oral Board interview.

- ⇒ The board will be comprised of three sworn Fire personnel.
- ⇒ The raters will take turns asking several (approximately 5) standard questions, as well as potentially asking questions related to your application materials.
- ⇒ The 2nd interview time allotment will be approximately 30 minutes.

Practice for the Firefighter-Recruit interviews.



- ✍ Analyze and be able to explain how you are qualified and why you should be selected for the Firefighter-Recruit position - your training, education, and work experience related to the position.
- ✍ Be familiar with your Firefighter-Recruit application materials.
- ✍ Practice listening to questions with multiple parts, taking a few notes about the questions, and then answering all parts of the questions.
- ✍ Make an audio and/or video tape of your practice sessions - and listen to or watch them, or practice in front of a mirror.
- ✍ Identify and correct any distracting mannerisms that you may have.
- ✍ Draft potential interview questions - and answer them.
- ✍ Seek feedback from coworkers, friends, family, etc.

Be professional.

- ⇒ Dress appropriately; suits are recommended for both men and women.
- ⇒ Avoid overwhelming smells - smoke, perfume, cologne, etc.
- ⇒ Arrive early, and be sure that you are at the right location.
- ⇒ Dispose of gum, tobacco, etc., and remove sunglasses, hats, etc.
- ⇒ Be courteous to everyone you encounter.

During the interview...



- ✍ Realize that it is natural to be nervous!
- ✍ Relax and breathe.
- ✍ Sit up straight.
- ✍ If you have “cotton-mouth”, consider having a sip of water; water will be provided.
- ✍ Listen carefully to the questions and respond concisely.
- ✍ To ensure that your answers are detailed and complete, consider taking a few, brief notes as questions are being asked.
- ✍ Smile and use humor *appropriately*.
- ✍ Don’t be intimidated by serious interviewers - they are supposed to be that way!

Reflect on the interview.

- ⇒ What went well?
- ⇒ What could you have done differently or better?
- ⇒ Were you adequately prepared?
- ⇒ How should you prepare for the next interview - even if you get this position?

